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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	Korea	REPORT NO.	<input type="text"/>
SUBJECT	Parachute Training, Techniques, and Equipment in North Korea	DATE DISTR.	25 March 1954
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1. In June 1953 the headquarters of the 536 Parachute Training Unit was at XE-224357 near Sinuiju airbase (N 40-06, E 124-24) (XE-2038). In the training area, which was about 25 by 18 feet, were jump ramps 5, 8, and 10 feet high, and a 20-foot high suspended harness. The headquarters offices and a supply room were in Korean-type buildings which enclosed the training area.
2. The commanding officer of the 536 Parachute Training Unit was Captain AN Ponghak (1344/7685/7729) who was about 30 years old and a member of the Korean Labor Party. He was an affable man. He was about 5'4 1/2" tall, weighed about 125 pounds, had a square face, and was dark complexioned. He was married and had an unknown number of children.
3. In July 1953 physical conditioning for North Korean parachutists prior to jump training consisted of calisthenics about 1 1/2 hours a day for several days. After a man was considered physically fit, jump practice from ramps took place six times daily, for about 3 weeks. The main points stressed were to keep the knees and the feet together, keep the neck close to the shoulder and the chin down, and keep one's back to the wind.
4. One parachute used by North Korean parachutists was the Emperka¹ 43 which consisted of a main chute and an auxiliary chute. The main chute canopy was about 20 feet square and had approximately 18 shroud lines. It was made of four or five strips of cloth of a very coarse check weave.² There was no breathing hole in the top of the chute, since the coarse weave of the material made one unnecessary. The main chute was pulled from the pack by a small drag chute about four feet square, which was attached to the apex of the main canopy. The chute weighed about 22 to 25 pounds. When assembled, it was 18 x 24 x 10 inches in size. The maximum capacity of the chute was 220 pounds. A man weighing 175 pounds when dropped from a height of 800 meters took 2 minutes, 50 seconds to descend. The chute could be opened either by a static line or by a rip cord.

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5. The harness for the Emperka 43 consisted of one strap over each shoulder and two straps which went between the legs and were attached to a point on the chest. To prevent the parachutist from being dragged along the ground, there was a quick-release, spring-lock mechanism into which four other spring locks were hitched.
6. A pilot's parachute was also square but was about one third smaller than the Emperka 43, had more silk, and could be packed more tightly. It was made with a number of squares of cloth rather than strips. Using a pilot's chute, a man weighing 130 pounds took about 1 minute, 30 seconds to descend from a height of 800 meters.
7. A North Korean guerrilla to be dropped into enemy territory selected his own drop zone which he plotted on a Chinese Communist forces Army-Air-Navy 1:200,000 scale map. The pilot would fly regardless of the moon phase, provided the weather was clear and ground winds were not more than about 12 miles per hour. The pilot would not fly, however, under instrument conditions. At drop time the pilot killed the engine approximately 1,200 to 1,500 meters from the drop zone, allowing the plane to glide to the zone. The drop was from a height of about 800 meters, with the plane travelling from 75-100 miles an hour. After landing, the only means of communication with the pilot was by flashlight.

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1.  Comment. Phonetic.
2.  Comment. The material was probably a combination of silk and cotton.

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